

REMARKS

The last Office Action in the above-identified application has been carefully considered and the above amendments are presented in order to place this application in condition for allowance.

The above amendments obviate the Examiner's objections and rejections of Claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 112 and 101.

The claims as originally filed were rejected by the Examiner as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,357,596 to Takebayashi, et al. That rejection is respectfully traversed, and it is submitted that the newly presented claims clearly distinguish over the Takebayashi patent.

The present invention relates to a method of conducting a simulated conversation with historical or popular personalities or characters, in which the particular individual personality or character can be selected by the user for the purpose of conducting a conversation in which the user, orally or through text messaging, present questions or comments to the simulated personality which then answers the questions and comments with responses selected and formulated from information associated with that particular personality in a database. In addition, the particular personality's image is controlled to reflect the personal characteristics and personality of the selected individual.

The present invention can be applied to a personal computer, but preferably is used to conduct a conversation over the Internet wherein the database is stored at a remote location accessible through the World Wide Web.

While the Takebayashi reference shows a unit which apparently is intended to be used in a fast food restaurant context, wherein the user speaks into a microphone at the drive-in of the restaurant and to conduct a "conversation" with a computer generated voice and image to make selections from the restaurant's menu. In this scenario, there is only a single character image on the screen, and no ability of the user to select a true individual or character with whom to converse on a topic of the user's choosing. Nothing in the Takebayashi reference teaches that the database provided therein can contain

multiple selectable personalities to be contacted, or that the system can generate responses to questions posed based on the personality and history of the character selected.

The present invention further distinguishes over the Takebayashi reference in that in one preferred embodiment, a host image is provided which conducts an initial conversation with the user to lead to the selection of the personality or character with whom the conversation is to be conducted, and who also remains accessible for providing help to the user. Takebayashi simply does not disclose this concept.

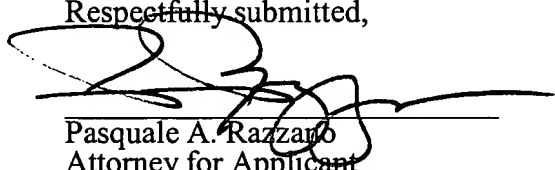
Still further, the present invention allows for the display of historical film or textual material associated with the particular character selected in response to particular questions that the user might ask. Takebayashi does not disclose this feature either. Still further, the present invention provides for the ability of the host to interrogate the user upon termination of the conversation in order to obtain data for the system operator in order to improve and expand the operation of the conversation system in the future.

For all of these reasons, applicant submits that the claimed invention as set forth in the newly presented claims above clearly distinguishes over the simplistic menu ordering system shown in the Takebayashi patent.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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--BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a flow diagram illustrating the method of the present invention.--

Page 3, line 4, change "Description of the Preferred Embodiment" to

--DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION--.

Page 9, line 1, change "What is Claimed is:" to --CLAIMS--.

Amendments to the Drawings:

Please add Fig. 1, submitted herewith at Tab A, to the application.